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FM AMEMBASSY BISHKEK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9658
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2173
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0259
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 0271
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 0757
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0573
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 0266
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0434
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUCPDOC/USDOC WASHDC 0590
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0618
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2580
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1959
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BISHKEK 000627

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DEPT FOR SCA/CEN (GEHRENBECK)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/27/2017

TAGS: PGOV MARR PREL KG

SUBJECT: MANAS: KYRGYZ TRY TO TONE DOWN THE VOLUME, BUT NOT
THE MESSAGE

REF: BISHKEK 614

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Classified By: Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary: Deputy Prime Minister Kydyrov's May 25 conversation with the Ambassador revealed what is likely to be the main Kyrgyz talking point during the visit of Secretary Gates: renegotiation of the base agreement. The

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Ambassador disabused Kydyrov of the notion that an "administrative penalty" could be levied against Zachary Hatfield if he is found innocent in the U.S. investigation of the Ivanov shooting. The text of a draft parliamentary resolution on the base calls for the termination of the base agreement, as well as additional compensation for recent incidents and an audit of base-related payments.

Presidential Chief of Staff Sadyrkulov advised the Ambassador that he will chair a May 26 meeting to provide senior Kyrgyz officials and parliamentarians the "right message" so that the hysteria on the base can be turned around. The Foreign Minister explained to the Ambassador today that the overnight seizure at Manas of U.S. ammunition bound for Afghan government troops was caused by confusion regarding paperwork generated by our Russian subcontractor, which had been forwarded by the Russian embassy. End summary.

The View from the MFA

12. (C) In a May 25 meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister Kydyrov, the Ambassador reviewed recent Embassy engagement

with Kyrgyz officials and the media on the base and urged the Kyrgyz leadership to discuss the positive aspects of the presence of Manas Airbase in Kyrgyzstan. While Kydyrov could not offer any ideas about additional steps the Embassy could take to combat the current pressure on the base, Kydyrov did not refute the Ambassador's comment that the interests of foreign powers are being advanced by the actions of some Kyrgyz officials who aim to raise the price of the base. Kydyrov cited a "diversity" of Kyrgyz opinions on the base, instability and an increasingly independent Parliament prior to stressing the need to "change the base agreement." Kydyrov said he expects a parliamentary resolution on the base, a government meeting to determine next steps no later than June 1 and a full parliamentary hearing in the near future, but was vague on the sequencing and the substance.

Keeping Talking Points under Wraps

¶3. (C) The Ambassador, after reviewing recent comments on alleged ecological damage caused by the base as well as interest in additional contracting opportunities for Kyrgyz businesses in Afghanistan, argued that it would be in our mutual best interests if the Kyrgyz shared their planned talking points or the visit of Secretary of Defense Gates. Kyrdyrov was noncommittal. The Ambassador again stressed that the meetings would be more productive if the specifics were available in advance.

Seeking Answers in the Hatfield Investigation

¶4. (C) Kydyrov inquired into the status of the U.S. investigation of the Hatfield/Ivanov case. The Ambassador outlined the general process, and asked for a copy of the Kyrgyz report by the end of May or confirmation that the

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Kyrgyz would not provide the report. Kydyrov noted that if Hatfield were found innocent by U.S. authorities, the Kyrgyz reaction would be "very bad." He suggested that some type of "administrative penalty" could be assessed against Hatfield. The Ambassador countered that such a step is not in accordance with U.S. legal procedures.

Draft Resolution Seeks to Denounce Bilateral Agreement

¶5. (C) The Embassy obtained on May 25 a draft version of the parliamentary resolution referenced at the May 23 parliamentary joint committee session (reftel). The resolution claims that "active operations" in Afghanistan have ended, the U.S. has "not provided the Kyrgyz side with the weapon" used in the Hatfield/Ivanov incident, the U.S. "demonstrated disrespect to Kyrgyz law" by returning Hatfield to the United States, the U.S. "has not made a decision on paying moral and material compensation" to the Ivanov family, the U.S. has not paid "relevant compensation" in the aircraft collision case, the "Anti-terror Coalition...has fulfilled its goals," and the existing agreements on Manas airbase "do not meet the interests of the Kyrgyz Republic."

¶6. (C) The parliamentary resolution seeks to:

- Declare Kyrgyz government actions in the Ivanov case "unsatisfactory;"
- Require the Kyrgyz government, within one month, to petition the United States to provide "moral and material compensation" to the Ivanov family and implement Parliament's December edict;
- Support the 2005 Shanghai Cooperation Organization declaration and press for the Ivanov case to be taken to the International Criminal Court;
- Require the Foreign Ministry to notify specific foreign countries, including the United States, of the "intention of the Kyrgyz Republic to terminate existing agreements and the

possibility of entering into new agreements;"
-- Task the Kyrgyz Chamber of Accounting to audit base-related payments made to the Ministry of Defense, local administrations, the airport and Kyrgyz Airlines;
-- Require the General Prosecutor's office to investigate Ministry of Defense officials for land code violations relating to the base agreement;
-- Recommend parliamentary denunciation of the base agreement; and
-- Propose a plenary debate on these issues for June.

GOKG to Counter Hysteria on the Base

¶17. (C) Presidential Chief of Staff Medet Sadyrkulov called the Ambassador May 25 to advise that, as a result of the "bad" parliamentary hearings and press, he will be chairing a May 26 meeting to provide Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and State Security Service officials as well as three parliamentary committee chairmen with "the right information on the base." Sadyrkulov said Foreign Minister Karabayev will "give a speech, so that people will understand." Subsequently, he surmised, the 18 officials who will be attending the meeting can explain the situation to the press and the public. Sadyrkulov clearly wanted to reassure Ambassador that the hysteria on the base would be reversed. Significantly, he said that he had cleared his actions with President Bakiyev.

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Aircraft Incident Stirs up Concerns

¶18. (C) Late on May 24, the Embassy learned that a Russian civilian carrier (subcontracted by the USG) carrying U.S. ammunition for Afghan government troops landed at Manas Airbase. The Russian crew was "invited to dinner" by Kyrgyz security personnel and the ammunition subsequently confiscated. The Ambassador protested this action to senior government officials, including Sadyrkulov, Deputy Defense Minister Oruzbayev and Foreign Minister Karabayev. She emphasized that it is not clear who currently possesses the ammunition. The Foreign Minister later informed the Ambassador that confusion over the subcontractor's incorrect paperwork, which had been forwarded by the Russian embassy in Bishkek, contributed to a misunderstanding about this shipment and U.S. interest in the case. Additional information on this incident will be reported in a separate e-mail.

Comment

¶19. (C) It now appears that senior Kyrgyz officials believe they need to intervene to cool tempers in Parliament and the press via Sadyrkulov's Saturday session. We hope this is the case, and that Kyrgyz officials will begin publicly supporting the base's continued presence. Nevertheless, we expect that there will be both a parliamentary resolution and a government decision calling for a review of the bilateral agreement in the next week. We also expect that the following week Secretary Gates will receive a request to renegotiate certain aspects of the 2001 bilateral agreement, including requests for additional compensation.

YOVANOVITCH